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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

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A technique for multicast switching in a distributed communication system having a plurality of cooperating modules enables a module to forward multicast packets associated with a multicast stream without using a centralized module or control logic by determining all network interfaces and remote modules associated with the multicast stream and forwarding multicast packets to only those network interfaces and remote modules associated with the multicast stream. IGMP snooping may be used to determine the network interfaces and remote modules associated with the multicast stream, and may also be used to determine host addresses, router addresses, and an IGMP version for each network interface and for each remote module. In order to generate IGMP messages, the module learns a multicast device address from received IGMP messages and uses the multicast device address to send the IGMP messages. The module decides whether to send IGMP version 1 messages or IGMP version 2 messages on a particular interface based upon the IGMP version of IGMP messages received over the interface.